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A SEARCH FOR THE English Schismatick:

By the CASE and CHARACTERS,

I. Of the *Dioceſan Canoneers.*

II. Of the *Preſent Meer Nonconformiſts.*

Not as an *Accuſation* of the *former*, but a Neceſſary *Defence* of the *later*, ſo far as they are wrongfully Accuſed and Perſecuted by them.

By *Richard Baxter*, One of the Accuſed.

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POSTSCRIPT.

THE *ſtrivings of Parliaments ſince Archbiſhop* Laud's *Government, againſt Innovations, Popery and Arbitrary overtopping Law, and their jealouſies of the deſigns and progreſs, while they themſelves were of the Old Church of* England, *do call us to think what the difference was between the Old and New.*

HE that would know what the Old Church of *England* is, let him read,

I. *The* 39 *Articles.*
II. *The Homilies.*
III. *The Apology, with* Jewels *defence.*
IV. Nowell's *Catechiſm.*
V. Deus & Rex (*all owned by the Church*).
VI. Hookers *Eccleſiaſtical Polity, in* 8 *Books.*
VII. *Biſhop* Bilſon *of Chriſtian Subjection.*
VIII. *Biſhop* Downham de Antichriſto.
IX. *The great Writers againſt Popery, as Dr.* Whitaker, *Dr.* Reynolds, *Dr.* Willet, *Dr.* Sutliff, *Dr.* White, *Dr.* Airy, *Dr.* Humphrey, *Dr.* Fulk, *Dr.* Prideaux, *Dr.* R. Abbot, *Dr.* Crakenthorp, *Dr.* Challoner, *Dr.* Hall, *Biſhop* Uſher, *Dr.* Davenant, *Biſhop* Carlton, Chillingworth, *Biſhop* Morton, *&c.*

HE that would know what is the New Church of *England*, ſince Biſhop *Laud* differs from the Old, let him read,

I. *Dr.* Heylin's *Writings, Dr.* Pocklingtons, *Mr.* Dows, Sybthorps *and* Mainwarings.
II. Heylin's *Life of B.* Laud, *particularly his deſcription of the deſigned reconciliation with the Papiſts.*
III. *Mr.* Thorndike's *Juſt weights and meaſures, and forbearance of Penalties.*
IV. *Archbiſhop* Bramhall's *book againſt me, explaining the new way in theſe particulars,* 1. *To abhor Popery.* 2. *That we all come under a Foreign Juriſdiction, obeying the Pope as the Weſtern Patriarch, and alſo as the* Principium unitatis *to the univerſal Church, Governing by the Canons.* 3. *That Diſſenters from this be accounted Schiſmaticks.* 4. *That we yield to what the* Grecks *have yielded, and be*

X. *The Writings againſt Biſhop* Laud, *viz. Biſhop* Hall's *Epiſtle to D. L. Archbiſhop* G. Abbots, *and Biſhop* R. Abbot's *judgment of him, and his Tryal, with what was there charged againſt him.*

XI. *The Harmony of Confeſſions, and the Synod of* Dort.

XII. *King* James's *Works.*

of their Religion. 5. *That* Grotius *was a Proteſtant for the Church of* England.

V. *Dr.* Parkers *Preface to that book, and Dr.* Pierce's *defence of* Grotius.

VI. Grotius *his Volume and Notes on* Caſſander, *ſpecially his* Diſcuſſio Apologetici Riveliani; *in which he profeſſeth,* 1. *That* Rome *is the Miſtris-Church.* 2. *Sound in faith.* 3. *That he finds Proteſtants can never unite, but by uniting with* Rome. 4. *He owns the Doctrine of the Councils, even that of* Trent. 5. *The Pope to govern by the Canons of the Councils, and not arbitrarily.* 6. *Nor muſt invade the rights of Kings or Biſhops.* 7. *That if the curioſities of the School-men, and the ill lives of the Clergy be diſowned and amended, this much is enough to ſober men.* 8. *And he ſaith that the* Engliſh *Biſhops were many of his mind, tho' the Separatiſts were not.*

VII. *The Earl of* Clarendon's *Defence of Dr.* Stillingfleet, *laying the nature of Popery in their injury to Princes.*

VIII. Guil. Forbes, *Biſhop of* Edenborough *his Irenicon.*

IX. *Mr.* Dodwell's *book againſt Schiſm, and the ſame doctrine maintained by others who nullifie Miniſtry and Churches, whoſe Epiſcopal Ordination hath not come down from the Apoſtles uninterrupted.*

X. *The Biſhops endeavours ſince* 1660, *to ſilence, fine, impriſon, baniſh, and drive five miles from all Corporations,* &c. *all ſuch as receive not the Impoſitions. Together with the reſt of the true Hiſtory of theſe laſt Twenty years.*

The particulars are not now to be recited.

A SEARCH FOR THE *ENGLISH SCHISMATICK:* OR, The True Characters of the ſeveral Accuſed Parties, by which they may be diſcerned.

CHAP. I.

The Parties Accuſed.

The Parties queſtioned are, I. *The Papiſts.* II. *The Dioceſan-Militants,* or *Canoneers.* III. *The Paſſive peaceable Conformiſts.* IV. *The Meer Non-conformiſts.* V. *The Sectarian Church-Appropriators, and Cauſeleſs Separatiſts and Dividers.*

1. THERE is no Sect of Chriſtians which maketh ſo great uſe of their pretence to Unity, and crying down Hereſie, Schiſm and Separation, as the Papiſts do; and yet are the greateſt Schiſmaticks and Dividers, as thus appeareth.

1. They have a ſelf-made humane univerſal Church, feigning

feigning the Pope to be the rightful Head of all the Christian World.

2. They exclude all from Christs Chuch, who are not the Popes Subjects, though at the Antipodes, where he never came nor sent.

3. They presume to make universal Laws for all the World.

4. They Curse men from Christ by Excommunications, who refuse such subjection and obedience to these Laws.

5. They have introduced many new Articles of Faith, on pretence of declaring and expounding Faith.

6. They have multiplied corrupting additions in the Christian Worship.

7. Their regular objective Religion now consisteth in so great a number of the Decrees of Councils, as no Christians can well understand, while they accuse Gods Laws as unintelligible.

8. They can give us no certainty which of these Councils are obligatory to us, while they contradict each other.

9. They agree not of the Essence of Christianity, or necessary truths; but resolve all into the uncertainty of [*sufficient Proposals*].

10. They damn men as Hereticks that deny not all humane sense, believing there is no Bread and Wine, when they see and taste them.

11. They burn such as Hereticks, and are for tormenting Inquisitions to destroy them.

12. They bind Temporal Lords to exterminate all such, and to swear to do it; and this on pain of Excommunication, Deposition and Damnation: So that a Protestant Kingdom under a true Papist King, hath a King that is thus

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thus bound to exterminate his Subjects, if he be able; and profeſſeth to do it on theſe three penalties, his Salvation lying on it.

13. They decree the giving of his Dominions to another, and abſolving his Subjects from their Oaths of Fidelity, if he obey not.

14. They decree, that it's Hereſie to hold that a King hath the power of Inveſting Biſhops, and that he is not thus ſubject to the Pope.

15. They tolerate their chief Doctors to write, that a Heretick is no King, at leaſt if Excommunicate, and may lawfully be killed.

16. Their Canons exempt the Clergy from being Governed and Taxed by Kings.

17. They forbid the reading of the Scriptures tranſlated, without a Licenſe.

18. They ſay that we cannot well believe the Goſpel, but on the credit of their Church: As if we muſt firſt know that the Pope and Council are authorized by Chriſt, before we believe in Chriſt himſelf.

19. They renounce Repentance by pretending to Infallibility.

20. They cheriſh a numerous Clergy and Sects, to carry on all this in the World, and perſwade high and low, that to promote their Church and Cauſe, is meritorious of Salvation.

II. By the *Paſſive Conformiſt*, I mean both ſuch as go on the grounds of Mr. *Sprint*, and think a Reformation very deſirable, but Conformity lawful to eſcape ſilencing and ruine; and ſuch as like Conformity for it ſelf, and with all others did Conform, but like not uncharitable cenſures, or ſilencings, or violence againſt conſcio-

nable Diſſenters, nor the compulſions which have cauſed our Church-convulſions. Though the Nonconformiſts muſt needs judge theſe to *partake in Schiſm*, ſo far as they own the Schiſmatical dividing terms of Communion, which are the greateſt hinderance of our Concord, and will be ſtill inconſiſtent with it; yet as they reproach not Diſſenters as Schiſmaticks, ſo neither are they accounted *Schiſmaticks* by the Diſſenters, becauſe they are ſound and peaceable brethren, and deſire to live as ſuch with others, and Schiſm is not their diſpoſition nor predominant. We would live in greater Love and Concord with ſuch as theſe, than the differing Conformiſts have with one another.

III. The names of *Sectaries* and *Separatiſts* are of no fixed ſignification, but vary according to the mind of the ſpeaker. But I now uſe them for thoſe, 1. Who *appropriate the Church* to ſome narrow *Sect* or *Party*, which denieth all others to be true Churches, or to have true Miniſters and Sacraments. 2. And next to thoſe, that though they own others as true Churches or Miniſters, yet hold their Communion unlawful, when it is not ſo, and renounce Communion with them on theſe grounds.

Such beſides Papiſts, are too many Prelatiſts, that deny the Miniſtry, Sacraments and Communion of the Reformed Churches, which are not ſuch as they; yea of all Churches that have not an Epiſcopacy by uninterrupted Succeſſion of Epiſcopal Ordination from the Apoſtles, and that excommunicate all that do but ſay that there are any true Churches in *England* but their own. And ſuch are ſome *Anabaptiſts*, ſome called *Browniſts*, or *Separatiſts* heretofore, *&c.* And the *Seekers* are much worſe, that deny all Churches; and the *Quakers* and *Ranters*, who

who revile the ſoundeſt; and all true Hereticks, who ſeparate by denying ſome Eſſential of Chriſtianity. All theſe are Schiſmaticks in the judgment of all ſound and ſober Chriſtians.

IV. By *Active Canonical Conformiſts*, I mean thoſe that are for the preſent frame of Eccleſiaſtical Government, with the Liturgy and Canons, and the Laws which enforce them (who call uſually for the Execution of thoſe Laws).

V. By the *meer preſent Nonconformiſts*, I mean ſuch as are guilty of no other puniſhable errors or ſins, but ſuch as the Act of Uniformity doth eject and ſilence us for; and who declared openly their judgments about Doctrine, Worſhip and Diſcipline, in 1660, after a Common meeting at *Sion*-Colledge, and another at the *Savoy*, which is publiſhed in Print; That is, the *Reconcilers*, or *Peacemakers*, who then laboured and beg'd for Peace and Unity in vain; who tye themſelves to the judgment of none called Nonconformiſts heretofore, Presbyterians, Independents, *&c.* but to the Word of God, and the example of the true Primitive Churches, and are not for Concord only with a Sect, or a dividing-party, High or Low, but for that *Catholick Church* and *Communion of Saints*, which are in our Creed.

Schiſm being a culpable rending of Chriſtians from each other, hath a great number of degrees (as it is by Apoſtaſie from the Univerſal Church totally, or by denying a fundamental, by Hereſie; or as it is but by denying Integrals, or but Accidents; as it is but from a particular Church, a Church of Gods forming, or of mans; As it is from a Church, as if it were no Church, or a corrupt

rupt Church falſly ſaid, or only a leſs deſirable; as it is from a Pariſh-Church, a Dioceſan, a National, *&c.* As it is *total* or *partial*, or but in ſome *accidents* from that particular Church, holding Communion in all the reſt; As it is mental, or but cauſeleſs local; As it is from a Church, or only from ſome perſons in a Church-Paſtor, or others; As it is by driving men by ſinful Impoſitions from a Church, or too eaſie departing; with many the like differences elſewhere opened.) So that as all men have ſome degree of ignorance, pride, hypocriſie, *&c.* and yet are not to be denominated ignorant, proud hypocrites, where it is not predominant; ſo all are defective in Love and Union, and few Churches on earth are no way guilty of Schiſm, and yet are not to be called Schiſmaticks, where it is not predominant.

Almoſt all Churches on earth accuſe each other of Schiſm; the Papiſts ſo accuſe the Greeks, Proteſtants, and all others; the Greeks ſo accuſe the Papiſts and Proteſtants (as the Patriarch *Jeremiah* ſhews us), and both the *Abaſſines*, *Jacobins*, *Neſtorians*, &c. The *Lutherans* ſo call the *Calviniſts*, and they many *Lutherans*; the Epiſcopal, Presbyterians, and Independents ſo accuſe each other: Sober and peaceable men muſt confeſs that moſt are guilty of ſome degree.

Laying by the reſt, our Queſtion now is of Two Parties here, the *Canoncer Dioceſan Conformiſts*, and the *Preſent meer Conformiſts*, which are the *ENGLISH SCHISMATICKS.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Case of the Diocesan-Canoneers, *or Zealots for Imposition of Conformity.*

1. THey agree not of the Essentiating Head of their own *National Church*; whether it be *Lay*, or *Clergy*, *King* or *Bishops* (and so are indeed of *divers Churches*), no nor whether it have *any constitutive Head*, or none.

2. Some hold *Bishops* necessary to the *Being* of a Church, and some only to the *well-being* of it; and so agree not neither what a particular Church is.

3. The *former* unchurch the *Parish-Churches*, and make them only parts of a proper Church, the *Diocesan* being the lowest in a politick sense.

4. They make the Parish-Priests, but half Priests or Pastors, denying them the Power of the Keys over their flock, save in a little part.

5. These deny the Reformed Churches, which have no Bishops, to be true proper Churches, and their Ministration and Sacraments to be valid: But others of them hold the contrary, and so differ in their Communion with the Protestant Churches.

6. Some of them say, that none are *true Ministers* of Christ that have not Episcopal Ordination by uninterrupted succession from the Apostles: And that their flocks have *no title to Salvation*, because they have it not by *Gods Covenant sealed* by such a *Ministry* of the *Sacraments*.

7. They

7. They hold twice Ordination ſinful; and yet Reordain thoſe who were ordained by meer Presbyters, or Rectors of Pariſh (City) Churches.

8. Some Leaders grant that there were no Subject-Presbyters in Scripture-times, nor Biſhops that had more than one ſtated Aſſembly and Altar, which others are againſt.

9. They agree not of the ſenſe of the words [*Presbyter* and *Biſhops*] in the Scripture.

10. Some of them reproach the Reformation of other Churches, as the Papiſts do, as the effect of fury and rebellion; and ſeek to render it odious as a crime.

11. Yea and the Reformation of *England* by K. *H.* 8. as the product of his filthy luſt and cruelty: And reckon the death of K. *Edw.* 6. for a mercy. Inſomuch, that out of Dr. *Heylin*, and ſome others, a Papiſt hath gathered *in terminis*, the moſt odious deſcription of our Reformation, called *Hiſtorical Collections*.

12. They diſagree about the points called *Arminian*. *Whitgift* the Mawl of the Nonconformiſts, with others, drawing up the high *Lambeth*-Articles for abſolute Reprobation, *&c.* and others, with *Laud*, as hot againſt them.

13. Theſe cenſure K. *James* for being againſt *Arminianiſm*, and ſending men to that end to the Synod of *Dort*, though they were all moderating-men.

14. Though we had there ſix excellent Divines, ſome think we are not obliged by that Synod, and ſome that we are (when we had not ſo many in moſt General Councils).

15. Thoſe that followed *Laud*, being few, durſt not long commit their Cauſe to a Convocation: And *Heylin* tells us, that the Convocations of *England* and *Ireland* were

were againſt them: and the Convocations are called *The Repreſentative-Church.*

16. Theſe divided from the reſt, ſtrove who ſhould prevail in Power: A. B. *Grindall* firſt, and A. B. *Abbot* next being caſt out, and both reproached by Dr. *Heylin* (*Laud*'s Pen-man) as the Heads of one Party in *England*, and B. *Uſher* in *Ireland*: and Biſhop *Laud* is praiſed as the Leader of the other ſide, Reforming the ſpoiled Reformation, which the Univerſities and Biſhops had ſpoiled by *Calviniſm.*

17. Theſe two Parties differed in their Zeal againſt the Nonconformiſts: *Grindall* being for Love and Lenity, and Lecture-Exerciſes to breed up Preachers, and *Abbot* by *Heylin* made a Miſchief to the Church for being popular: but *Laud*'s Party being for more ſeverity againſt them, which was exerciſed accordingly.

18. Theſe two Parties alſo differed in their way and deſigns towards the Papiſts. A. B. *G. Abbot*, B. *Rob. Abbot*, *Hall* and others ſuſpecting *Laud* as *Popiſh*, and being themſelves againſt Toleration of Popery: But B. *Laud* (ſaith Dr. *Heylin*) attempting by alterations and abatements, and reconciling means to open our Church-door ſo wide, that we might again all joyn together, as in the beginning of Queen *Elizabeths* Reign.

19. Theſe two Parties differed about Prerogative, Laws and Property; A. B. *Abbot* writeth, that he was caſt down for denying to Licenſe *Sybthrop*'s Book for the Kings Power to raiſe money, and the peoples obligation to pay it. And his Narrative (which you may read in *Ruſhworth*) intimateth that B. *Laud* was the chief means of this Impoſition on him, to Licenſe *Sybthrop*'s Book, and ſo of his Sufferings: The two greateſt Writers for Prelacy and Conformity are Biſhop *Bilſon* and *Hooker* (to the reading of whom B. *Morley* referred me for inſtruction, when he forbid me Preaching in *Worceſter* Dioceſs, and) whom we are uſually challenged to anſwer. Biſhop *Bilſon* ſaith (*Chriſ.* Subject, *pag.* 520. ["If a Prince ſhould go

"about

" about to ſubject his Kingdom to a Forreign Realm, or change " the form of the Common Wealth from Impery to Tyranny, " or neglect the Laws eſtabliſhed by common conſent of Prince " and People, to execute his own pleaſure; In theſe and " other ſuch caſes which might be named, if the Nobles and " Commons joyn together to defend their ancient and accu- " ſtomed Liberty, Regiment and Laws, they may not well be " counted Rebels.] See more pag. 381, 382. *Grotius de jure* " *Belli* goeth much farther.* *Ri. Hooker* ſaith [That it is no " better than Tyranny for any Prince or Potentate of what " kind ſoever to exerciſe Law-making of himſelf, and not ei- " ther by expreſs Commiſſion received immediately and per- " ſonally from God, or elſe by authority derived at firſt from " their conſent, upon whoſe perſons they impoſe it, *Eccl. Pol.* " *l.* 1. §. 10. *p.* 21. And that in Kingdoms of this quality (as " ours) the Higheſt Governour hath indeed univerſal Domi- " nion, but with dependancy on that whole entire body over " the ſeveral parts whereof he hath dominion: So that it " ſtandeth for an axiom in this caſe, The King is *Singulis Ma-* " *jor*, *univerſis Minor*, Lib. 8. p. 193. and p. 194. [Neither " can any man with Reaſon think, but that the firſt inſtitution " of Kings (a ſufficient conſideration, wherefore their power " ſhould always depend on that from which it did always flow) " by original influence of power from the body into the King, " is the cauſe of Kings dependency in power on the body: " By dependancy we mean Subordination and Subjection.] " The Axioms of our Regal Government are theſe: *Lex facit* " *Regem*—*Rex nihil poteſt niſi quod jure poteſt*—Pag. 218, 221, " 223, 224. Againſt all equity it were that a man ſhould ſuffer " detriment at the hands of men for not obſerving that which " he never did either by himſelf or others mediately or imme- " diately agree to—What Power the King hath, he hath it by " Law; the bounds and limits of it are known. The entire " Community giveth order, *&c.* as for them that exerciſe

" power

"power altogether againſt order, though the kind of power "which they have may be of God, yet is their exerciſe there- "of againſt God, and therefore not of God, otherwiſe than by "permiſſion, as all injuſtice is. *Page* 224. Uſurpers of Power, "(whereby we do not mean them that by violence have aſpi- "red to places of higheſt authority, but them that uſe more "authority than ever they did receive in form and manner "above-mentioned) ſuch Uſurpers thereof as in the exerciſe "of their power, do more than they have been authorized to "do, cannot in conſcience bind any to obedience]: Thus "*Hooker*.

"*Hollingſhead* (a Miniſter) maketh Parliaments ſo mighty, "as to take down the greateſt Kings.

"Biſhop *Jewel* defendeth the defenſive arms of the *French* "Proteſtants, as *Bilſon* and others do.

On the other ſide ſome held, that [*it is unlawful on any pretence whatſoever to take Arms againſt the King, or any Commiſſioned by him in purſuance of that Commiſſion.*] And thus the Clergy were then divided about ſuch things, which prognoſticated much that followed.

20. The Laity, Lords and Commons were divided after theſe two Parties: And the Parliaments ſtill adhered to the (then) major part againſt *Laud*'s Party, and inſiſted on Grievances, *viz.* 1. Increaſe and favour of Popery. 2. Arminianiſm. 3. About their Property and Liberty, Taxing and Impriſoning, *&c.* as *Ruſhworth* and *Heylin* ſhew at large of divers Parliaments.

21. By this unhappy breach Parliaments ſtill harping on the ſame, and the King diſſolving them, and *Abbot*, and *Richard Hooker*, and the moſt being for the one ſide, and Biſhop *Laud*, *Neale*, *Howſon*, *Corbet*, *Buckeridge* and *Montague* for the other; the Court and Parliaments came to the unhappy jealouſies and diſtruſts, which at laſt broke out into a miſerable War. In which the A. B. of *Canterbury* (*Laud*) was on one ſide, and was

put to death (the Hiſtory and Articles are known) and the other A. B. (*Williams* of *York*) was on the other ſide, and became a Commander in *North-Wales* for the Parliament; and their Clergy were accordingly divided: one part of the Conformiſts adhering to the King, and the other to the Parliament; many of which made up the *Weſtminſter*-Synod.

22. This War thus begun between the two Parties of the Epiſcopal Laity and Clergy (in *England*), after drew in the *Scots* to help the Parliament, and many Papiſts to help the King, neither of them being the firſt Parties, but Auxiliaries, (though in *Scotland* and *Ireland* it was otherwiſe begun).

23. Theſe Auxiliaries of the Parliament would not help them, but on the terms of the Covenant, and ſo Church-alterations came on; and the Parliament thought it was better have no Biſhops, than ſuch as did prevail againſt them.

24. When Wars and Miſery had tired both ſides, and made them long for reconciliation, and this endeavour had called home the King, and many Biſhops and Doctors had promiſed to be for Concord upon neceſſary healing-terms, and the Lords, Knights and Gentlemen had printed many Proteſtations for Peace, and againſt Revenge; and the King had Commiſſioned us to treat with the Biſhops for Concord, and told us, They ſhould meet us, if we would come as near as we could to them; When the Kings Declaration ſeemed to have almoſt healed us, the Commiſſioned Biſhops ſtood to it, that *no abatements were neceſſary*; and though we foretold them the impoſſibility of Common concord, without abating ſome things which did them no good, but harm, and the advantage which Schiſm, Contention and Popery would unavoidably get, which they might eaſily and cheaply prevent; we pleaded, we beg'd by a long Petition; but all in vain: nothing would move them, but when we only foretold them of the Diviſions that muſt needs follow, when Thouſands were forced againſt their Conſciences, they took it as if we threatned Sedition, and turned

our

our Petitions and Arguments for the common peace and concord (as if it had been a crime) againſt both it and us.

25. And the Convocation caſt away the Kings Declaration, and drew up the changes in the Liturgy, which added to our burden, and drew the Parliament to confirm it all; and in the Act of Uniformity much more unpracticable by us, is impoſed, which made our breach what ſince it is.

26. No man now muſt be in *Truſt* and *Office* in any *City* or *Corporation*, who will not declare, that [*there is no obligation on him, or any other perſon from the Covenant*] not excepting [*againſt Popery, Schiſm or Propkaneneſs*], though he would confeſs it unlawfully impoſed and taken, and renounce all obligation to rebellion, or any evil.

27. No adult perſon or Infant muſt be admitted to Chriſtendom by baptiſm, without the tranſient Image of a Croſs, as a dedicating, engaging Covenanting-ſign and ſymbol, or badg of Chriſtianity.

28. No Infant muſt be Chriſtened, without Godfathers, who are his Covenant-ſureties, and undertake his pious education, though the Parents can get none that will ſeriouſly tell them they intend to perform it: The Parents being not allowed to ſpeak one offering or Covenanting-word; nor muſt be urged to be preſent.

29. No perſon muſt be admitted to Sacramental Communion, who thinketh it a ſin to receive it kneeling, leſt it ſhould be ſeeming compliance with Popiſh adoration.

30. No perſons muſt be admitted to Communion, who have not Confirmation by Epiſcopal Impoſition of hands, or are deſirous of it; though they fear it is made a Popiſh Sacrament, by the addition [*Upon whom, after the example of the holy Apoſtles, we have now laid our hands, to certifie them BY THIS SIGN of thy favour and gracious goodneſs towards them.*]

31. Though they will not tell us what the Church of *England* is, that is, *Its Eſſentiating form and Head, Lay or Clergy*, yet

yet every man must be *ipso facto*, excommunicate who saith, *It is not an Apostolical Church as established by Law.*

32. Every one is excommunicate *ipso facto*, who saith, that [*the form of Worship established by Law, contained in the Book of Common-prayer, is corrupt, or unlawful, or containeth ANY THING in it that is repugnant to the Scriptures.*

33. All are excommunicate *ipso facto*, who say, *That any of the 39 Articles are in any part, such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe to; though it be but that of the Churches power to impose Ceremonies:* And yet divers Conformists are against the Doctrine about Free-will, Heathens damnation, &c.

34. All are *ipso facto excommunicate*, who say that [*the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England are superstitious, or such as godly men may not with a good conscience approve, use, and on occasion subscribe.*] See *Can.* 3, 4, 5, 6. So that not only Ministers, but all men and women that differ but of the Lawfulness of any one of their Ceremonies, and say so, are *excommunicate* already *ipso facto.*

35. All are *ipso facto excommunicate* that say, that the *Government of the Church of England under his Majesty, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and THE REST that bear Office in the same, is repugnant to the word of God.*] So that if one were for Archbishops, Bishops, and Priests, and Deacons, and thought but *Deans* or *Archdeacons* unscriptural and sinful, he is excommunicate; yea or *Lay-Chancellours* decretive power of the Keys; for [*the rest that bear Office*] must needs include them: And yet many Bishops themselves are against them.

36. All are excommunicate *ipso facto*, who say that *the form and manner of making and Consecrating Bishops, Priests or Deacons, hath any thing repugnant to the word of God*, C. 8.

37. They are to be excommunicate that say, *Ministers refusing to subscribe, may truly take the name of another Church not established by Law*, &c. And yet the Church of *Rome* is said to be a *true*, though *faulty* Church, by many; and a faulty Church may

may be a Church: And (they ſay that) the *Dutch* and *French* Churches here, ſtand but by the Act of King and Council.

38. All are to be excommunicated that ſay, *that there are within this Realm other Congregations of the Kings born Subjects, than ſuch as are allowed by Law, who may rightly take the name of true and lawful Churches.*] *E. g.* If *Glouceſter*, that had a Papiſt Biſhop, *Goodman*, had choſen themſelves a Biſhop, and called themſelves a true Church, *&c.*

39. They Command all to *keep the Lords day, and other Holy-days, accordsng to Gods holy Will in hearing the Word of God read and taught, in private and publick prayer*], and yet ſuſpended and ruined many Conformable Miniſters for not reading a book for dancing and playing on that day.

40. And where many thouſands in a Pariſh cannot come within their Church-doors, nor have any Conformiſt elſewhere in the Pariſh to teach them, they forbid them on great penalties to hear Nonconformiſts; and call them Separatiſts and Schiſmaticks, unleſs they forbear like Savages all publick Learning and Worſhip of God, rather than hear and joyn with Nonconformiſts.

41. Yet they Swear the Church-Wardens to preſent all that come not to Church, and puniſh them for not coming, when ſome Pariſhes have 40000, ſome 30000, ſome 10000 that can have no room, and the Church-Wardens cannot know them.

42. Yet if they go to other Pariſhes oft for Communion, they muſt not be admitted, but forbidden and ſent home.

43. No Miniſter in regard of Preaching, or any other reſpect may diminiſh Orders, Rites, Ceremonies or Prayers, nor add any thing in the matter or form, *C.* 14.

44. Though many melancholy perſons dare not communicate in the Sacrament, and many other are ſecretly conſcious of Atheiſm, Infidelity, or wickedneſs, they muſt be compelled to receive thrice a year.

45. The Miniſter is to be ſuſpended who giveth the Sacra-

ment

ment to any that kneel not, or that ſpeak againſt the book of Common-prayer, Ceremonies, &c.

46. No one may be made a Miniſter, or permitted to exerciſe that Office, who will not ſubſcribe, that the book of Common-prayer and Ordination containeth in it *nothing contrary to the word of God, and that he will uſe that form and no other.* And that will not declare publickly in the Church his [*unfeigned Aſſent and Conſent to All and every thing contained and preſcribed in and by that book.*

47. He muſt be caſt out and ſilenced that doth not *Aſſent* that [*It is certain by Gods Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual ſin, are undoubtedly ſaved*]; not excepting thoſe whoſe Parents are Jews, Infidels, Heathens, or Atheiſts, and whoſe Godfathers are Atheiſts, Hobbiſts or Impious.

48. They muſt *Aſſent, Conſent* to, and *Practice, ſigning Infants* at *Baptiſm* with the *Croſs, to dedicate them by that badg to his ſervice, whoſe benefits beſtowed on them in baptiſm, the name of the Croſs doth repreſent, in token that he ſhall not be aſhamed to profeſs the faith of Chriſt crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner,* &c. which ſeemeth to us to be thus made a Sacrament.

49. They muſt deny to Chriſten all that refuſe this.

50. They muſt conſent to deny baptiſm to all that have not ſuch undertaking Godfathers, as aforeſaid, though the Parents would enter them into the Covenant, who are forbidden to be Godfathers, or ſpeak a Covenanting-word.

51. They muſt profeſs Conſent to deny the Sacrament to all that dare not take it kneeling: I ſpeak all this as impoſed on Miniſters, and before as on the people.

52. They muſt profeſs, conſent and practice to pronounce all that they bury to be *taken to God in mercy, where we hope to come,* &c. (except only the excommunicate, unbaptized and ſelf-murderers) were they Atheiſts or profane.

53. They

53. They must declare Assent to a false rule for finding *Easter*-day, and consent to keep two *Easters* often, yea though it be confessed false.

54. They must consent to read [the *first Lesson*] out of *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Bel and the Dragon*, and other Apocryphal-books for most of two months.

55. None must be suffered to Preach, that will not subscribe [*That it is not lawful on any pretence whatsoever to take Arms against those that are Commissionated by the King*] while we understand not, whether the Law be not above his Commission, and in some cases allow not the Sheriff to resist it, and whether that be his Commission which is contrary to Law, if it have his Seal; and so the keeper of the Seal may Commission men to seize on his strength and treasure, and to let in an enemy, or consequently depose the King: No words can more exclude exceptions, than the exclusion of [*any pretence whatsoever.*]

56. None must preach that subscribeth not, that [*There lyeth no obligation from the Oath, called the Covenant, on him or* ANY OTHER *person to endeavour any change or alteration of Church-Government:* Though many Hundred thousands took that Oath, whom we know not, nor their sense; and many Parliament-men that imposed it: And so all Reformation of Church-Government is made unlawful and impossible, though vowed.

57. This Church-Government by Decretive Excommunication and Absolution is exercised by *Lay-Chancellors*; and all must subscribe against all endeavours, though vowed to amend it, though some Bishops confess it to be evil.

58. The Parishes, as is aforesaid, are made by many *no true Churches*, but *parts* of the lowest Church: And Parish-discipline is excluded: The Priest hath no Power of the exterior Keys, but to execute the decrees of the Bishop or Chancellor.

59. Some Dioceses have above 1000 Parishes, some many

hundreds; by which Christs true Discipline described, *Mat.* 18.15. 1 *Cor.*5.1. 1 *Thess.*5.12,13. *Heb.*13.7,24. 1 *Tim.*5.25, 26. *Tit.* 3.10, &c. is as impossible as for one Schoolmaster to be the sole Governour of many score or hundreds of Schools, having Teachers only under him. And none that Vow'd it may endeavour to mend this, and render true Church-discipline again a possible thing.

60. The Souls of men have great need of Pastors near them, and able to resolve their Cases of Conscience, and comfort them and help them in manifold straits: And many Parishes are so great, that the Priests cannot do such Offices for one of many hundred; nor do they do it; nor know the people: And other Parishes (too many) have Priests that are raw unskilful men, utterly unfit for such Pastoral helps: And the Bishop is far off, and must have hundreds with him at once, should he do that work: so that it is mostly undone. And yet those are punished that chuse Pastors to do it in such need.

61. If a Parish have a Priest so drunken, that his own family can scarce live with him; or so insufficient, that he never preacheth, because he cannot, or will not, and the people scruple encouraging such a one in his ill undertaking of the Ministry, and dare not take him for their Pastoral Guide, they are forbidden to go from him, and to communicate in the next Parish; and the Minister that receiveth them, or baptizeth their Children, though conformable, is suspended, *C.* 57.

62. No Minister must Preach in a private house, save in times of necessity, through sickness; nor may they on any occasion of sickness, or the like, keep any Fasts in their Churches, or in any private house, nor be present at them, which are not appointed by Authority, *C.*61,62. Nor may they hold meetings for Sermons or Exercises.

63. Ordination enableth no man to preach without farther license.

64. They Excommunicate all Ministers that voluntarily re-

relinquish their callings, and use themselves as Lay-men. And yet thousands must do both, if the Bishops silence them.

65 He that preacheth to more than four, not of his family, if he conform not, must be fined 40 *l.* a Sermon (and he that owneth the ground 20 *l.*) and the Preacher Imprisoned Six months in the Common Jayl: and the Hearers fined. And if he swears not *never to endeavour any alteration* (or amendment) of their Government, he must be banished Five miles from Cities, Corporations, and all places where he lately preached; or lie Six months in Jayl if he come nearer; though the Law say that the Parish must keep him in his want.

66. The Parish-Priest must publish Excommunications, though against his conscience, against godly men for not Conforming, *&c.* while thousands that never come to Church or Sacraments, and Swearers and Atheists, Hobbists and wicked men are members of their Church, from year to year continued.

67. The Canon 139 excommunicateth all that say, that the *Synod of this Nation, in the name of Christ, and by the Kings authority assembled, is not the true Church of England by representation.* By which they seem to make the King no part of the Church, nor any of the Laity, or else that they represent King and Laity: and they intimate that all the Clergy is the Church-real, and the Synod the Representative.

68. They brought in new Canons, and the *et cætera* Oath in 1640, without the Parliament, which were condemned.

69. From the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth*, till now, they have prosecuted and silenced Protestants that durst not conform: even their fellow Exiles in Queen *Maries* days were silenced, and multitudes after in King *James*'s days, and even Conformists suspended about the Dancing-book, and troubled about Altars, Bowing, Afternoon-Sermons and Lectures, which were forbidden; and about 2000 ejected and silenced at once 1662: And multitudes of Families driven to *Holland* and *New-England*. Though we offer them our Oaths, that we will gladly

conform, if by any ſtudy we can but ſee that it will not involve us in the guilt of *Lying*, *owing the Perjury of maltitudes unknown to us*, *corrupting the Church and Gods Worſhip*, *Covenanting deliberately againſt needful Reformation of the Church-Government by Lay Chancellours and uncapable Dioceſans*, and many *other crimes*, with dreadful aggravations recited in our firſt *Plea for Peace*.

70. They ſeparate from us and our Congregations as unlawful to be joyned with.

71. Though it was the judgment of the ancient Churches, expreſt in many Canons, that he was *no Biſhop* that had not the peoples election or conſent, they make it Schiſm not to obey ſuch, and allow the people no ſuch power.

72. They ſuppoſe that God hath entruſted the King to chuſe for all his Subjects whom they ſhall commit the conduct of their Souls to as their Paſtors and Biſhops; though he be not truſted to chuſe our Phyſicians, our Wives, our Dyet, *&c.* And ſo they would make the King anſwerable for all ill-choſen Paſtors. And if a Papiſt, Heretick, or a hater of Paſtoral holineſs ſhould ever be King, in how ſad a caſe are the peoples ſouls.

73. Yea, they hold that Patrons, be they never ſo *ignorant* or *ungodly*, muſt chuſe all that ſhall have the Parochial truſt of Souls (As to the poſſeſſion of Temples and Tythes, we yield it); they ſay, The people muſt have no other, than what the Patrons chuſe and impoſe on them.

74. Excommunication of Diſſenters ſeemeth little to them, but they by the writ *de Excommunicato Capiendo*, lay them in Jayl till death, unleſs they change their Judgment, which it is not in their power to do.

75. Though we publiſh our abhorrence of all Doctrines of Rebellion, and diſown even ſo much popularity, as their *Richard Hooker*, and moſt Politicks own, many of them go on to charge Nonconformiſts with ſuſpicions of Rebellion, and to provoke the King againſt them, as diſloyal.

76. They

76. They print and preach to provoke Magiſtrates to execute the foreſaid ſevere Laws, to ſilence and ruine them, and accuſe them for not doing it.

77. They ſtir up the people to take them for intollerable ſeditious Schiſmaticks, to the deſtruction of Chriſtian Love, and cauſing men to hate each other.

78. By theſe means families are diſtracted; Husbands againſt Wives, Parents againſt Children; ſome caſting them out, if they do but hear a Nonconformiſt Preacher, while ſenſuality corrupteth youth, and needeth more reſtraint.

79. When the Kings Clemency Licenſed our Meetings, they grudged at it, and neverthelſs ſeparated from us, though they deſcribe Separation to be Meetings held againſt authority; and thereby ſhewed that it is ſomewhat elſe than the Kings authority that they contend for, and ſomething more than our want of Licenſe which cauſeth their fervent oppoſition.

80. Though we beg of them in vain to prevent the Papiſts advantage by our diviſions; and though they ſeem reſolved to let Popery it ſelf come in, rather than either reſtore us or tolerate us, and abate what we count ſin, and they call Indifferent; yet do they perſwade people that we are bringing in Popery, if we obey not all their Impoſitions; and talk as if either no *Diſſenters* were tollerable (when all men differ, and they among themſelves in as great matters as from us) or All were tolerable: both which are abominable: And as if he that were unwilling to be deſtroyed by Prelatiſts, were introducing Popery; Should a man chuſe rather to be ſaved by a Papiſt, than hanged by a Prelatiſt, who were more to be ſuſpected of Popery, He that made that choice, or he that put it upon him.

81. Beſides the reconciling treaty with the Papiſts, aſſerted by Dr. *Heylin*; ſome chief Doctors profeſs that they would have the Church in the ſame ſtate, as when the *Greeks* and *Latine* did divide, and grant what the *Greeks* grant; not denying

the

the Pope to be *Principium unitatis*, and pleading for *Grotius* as a Proteſtant of our Churches mind, who was for the Council of *Trent*, and all the reſt; deſiring no more for our Concord with the Church of *Rome*, but that as by the Miſtris Church they may rule by the Canons, and not abſolutely, ſecuring the Rights of Kings and Biſhops, and reforming Scholaſtick curioſities, and the Clergies lives.

82. Under all the new Impoſitions, we were never allowed to ſpeak for our ſelves, nor durſt once Petition the Parliament that ejected us, or any ſince, for relief or audience, leſt ſuch boldneſs ſhould more incenſe our afflicters.

83. There is no ſurer way to deſtroy their own Church-pomp and grandure, and root out Epiſcopacy more than we deſire, than to uſe it for Satan againſt faithful Miniſters, and againſt the Souls of men, and againſt the honour and innocency of Princes, and againſt the property and liberty of Subjects, even againſt God and man, and ſo to make it odious to mankind, by making it intollerable: Till they that cannot tolerate a differing-word do weary the world by their intollerable pride, and caſt down themſelves, and then blame others.

84. To this day, while they accuſe thoſe of Schiſm that dare not ſubſcribe, declare, ſwear, and do the things aforeſaid, and plead againſt the enduring of them, to preach or ſolemnly worſhip God, they diſagree in Doctrines, and many great matters among themſelves, and take not themſelves for Schiſmaticks: Of which ſee our 2*d* Plea, *pag.* 158, 159.

85. Some of them are for Original ſin, according to the ſubſcribed Articles: Biſhop *Jer. Taylor* and others were againſt it; and Biſhop *Warner* hath writ againſt him.

86. Some of them preach for the Imputation of Chriſts Righteouſneſs: Mr. *Thorndike*, Mr. *Sherlock* and others differ; and many of them ſharply accuſe and preach againſt each other thereabout; yea with high accuſations, as heretical.

87. Some of them preach up Gods Eternal Decrees of Election

ction and Derelection, or Reprobation, in that ſort, as others of them preach againſt as blaſphemy againſt God, and deſtructive to the piety and peace of man.

88. Some of them preach for univerſal Redemption as a neceſſary point of faith, which others cry down as *Arminianiſm*.

89. Some of them make Juſtifying-faith to contain Obedience, and others cry it down as *Popery* and *Socinianiſm*.

90. Some of them ſay that God hath given to all men ſufficient grace to ſalvation (yea ſay ſome, and efficient), which others call *Arminianiſm*.

91. Some of them ſay that it is Gods Grace that maketh the faithful to differ from others, and others ſay it is their own Wills: And about the parts of Grace and Free-will they preach and write againſt each other.

92. Some of them preach that all the juſtified perſevere. And others preach it down as a dangerous errour. I have tryed to reconcile all theſe, but they go on.

93. Some of them are only for *Bidding prayer* in the Pulpit, as if all other were forbidden by the Canon (as *Heylin*): others uſe prayer there.

94. Some there pray in their own words, and ſome only in the words of the Liturgy: ſome uſe the ſame words, and others vary them.

95. Their Cathedral Worſhip much differeth from the Parochial, and ſome Churches uſe Organs, and others have none.

96. One writeth for the Religious uſe of *Lent* (as Biſhop *Cuning*), others as Biſhop *Taylor* (and Dr. *More*), &c. are againſt their principles and uſe: yea and againſt many other things of Church-Government and ſignificant Ceremonies which the other party hold. See *Taylor* cited 2*d* Plea for Peace.

97. Some of them are for the Divine right of the Lords Day, and the Morality of the fourth Commandment: which *Heylin* and many others vehemently deny.

98. One is for Altars, and Rails, and others againſt them, and others for indifferency.

99. In

99. In preaching they uſe very different Methods: And ſome Churches of them begin to uſe new Verſions of the ſinging Pſalms.

100. Some following *Grotius de Jure Belli*: and Dr. *Taylors Ductor Dubitantium* are for *uſeful lying*, which injureth not others (and therefore no doubt for doubtful Conformity). But others are againſt it.

101. But they no-where more differ, than in their Conformity it ſelf, one taking the words in one ſenſe, and another in another; ſo that their Conformity is not the ſame thing, though the Letters and ſound of voice be the ſame. One by his *Aſſent and Conſent to all things in the three books* meaneth plainly; and another meaneth, but that he may and will *uſe ſo much as concerneth him*: One by [*Not reſiſting by Arms any Commiſſioned by the King*] meaneth as he ſpeaketh. Another limiteth it to [*Lawfully Commiſſioned*]; One by [*on any pretence whatſoever*] meaneth as he ſaith: Another excepteth as *Bilſon* aforeſaid, and ſuch caſes as King *Johns*, who gave up his Kingdom to the Pope, and would have done to the *Morocco-Mahometan*; and many other ſuch inſtances (as Killing the Parliaments, City, *&c.*) One that ſubſcribeth never to endeavour any Alteration of Church-Government, meaneth as he ſpeaketh: Another excepteth Lay-Chancellours uſe of the Keys, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, *&c.* if the King would change them. One by [*any endeavour*] meaneth as he ſaith: Another meaneth only [*unlawful endeavour*], one by [*nothing contrary to Gods word*] in *Can.* 36. meaneth plainly: Another meaneth [*nothing which maketh Communion unlawful*]: One taketh all the impoſed ſubſcriptions to be but a promiſe of ſubmiſſion and peace, which others abhor, and are for the Truth of all that they ſubſcribe aſſent to. In a word, ſome are for the common Rule of *taking all the words in the uſual ſenſe*, except the Impoſers declare a different ſenſe: And others are for neceſſary ſuppoſing, that the Impoſers meant well, whatever they ſaid, and there-

therefore our Charity and honouring them bindeth us to put no ſenſe on their words which is contrary to Gods Law, the Law of the Land, or Common Right; and ſuppoſing them true and good, whatever they are, who can doubt but they may be ſworn or ſubſcribed.

102. Dr. *Hammond* and his party thought that it doth not appear that there were any ſubject Presbyters in Scripture-times, and ſo that every ſingle Congregation had a Biſhop preſent in worſhipping God. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* ſaith *p.* 269. *While the Apoſtles lived, it is probable there were no fixed Biſhops, or but few.* And ſo the world had but 12 or 13 indefinite Biſhops, who are not proved to have any peculiar determinate Dioceſſes.

103. Mr. *Dodwell*, and I think moſt of them, take the Church of *England* to be a Political ſociety, and many think we overthrow Church and Order, if we deny Churches to be formed by a Conſtitutive Government. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* not only holdeth that the Church of *England* is but the Paſtors and people conſenting by Parliaments to live under the ſame Laws about Religion, without any Conſtitutive Church-Head (one or many); but alſo peremptorily concludeth, that to maintain ſuch a Conſtitutive Supreme Church-power will neceſſarily infer Popery; and ſo maketh all the Conformiſts neceſſarily to lead in Popery, who are for ſuch Political Churches, and Conſtitutive Governours.

104. Mr. *Cheny* ſaith, That to make Churches by Covenants, confederacies or conſent, beſides baptiſm, is to be guilty of blaſphemy, impiety, irreligiouſneſs, infidelity; and one ſhould rather die than yield to it. But Dr. *Stillingfleet* ſaith the Church of *England* is one Church, made by ſuch conſent.

But ſuch Schiſms among themſelves are too many to be here numbered. And no wonder when they differ ſo much as they do with their own Sentiments, in one and the ſame book, ſaying and unſaying, as the argument in hand requireth.

E. g. Dr. *Stillingfleet* thinketh that the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, being Metropolitan, prove Dioceſan or Metropolitan-Biſhops, then in being: And yet, that while the Apoſtles lived, it's probable there were no fixed Biſhops, or but few. And ſo either ſeven Apoſtles were the Angels of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, reproved ſo much for their ſin and back-ſliding, or the Angels ſignified not the Biſhops.

While we are all Schiſmaticks for diſobeying, ſay ſome, and holding Nonconforming Aſſemblies, ſay others, from the Church of *England*; yet this Church is no proper Political Church, and hath no Conſtitutive chief Government, ſaith Dr. *St.* and therefore hath no authority to make Canons to command us.

He no leſs than threatneth us with damnation (not in the retracted *Irenicum*, but in his late book againſt *Popiſh Idolatry*) if we chuſe not the *pureſt Church*: and the Papiſt granteth it, and ſaith as he; And yet it is the ſubſtance of his *unreaſonable* books to prove us Schiſmaticks, if we depart from their Church, or ſo much as preach to other Aſſemblies, on the account of *purer worſhip*, and *greater edification*, &c. And he had the wit to paſs by this citation in the Epiſtle of a book againſt him.

As for Mr. *Cheny*, and divers other ſuch, another book openeth their Contradictions.

They often tell us of the Nullity of the Miniſtry, or Power which is not received from Epiſcopal Superiors; Eſpecially Biſhop *Gunning* and Mr. *Dodwell*, hence draw diſmal degrading and unchurching Conſequences. And yet thus they condemn both the *Engliſh*, and *Roman*, and Univerſal Church. If Church-power be given by Inferiors, the Independents are not to be confuted: If from equals, as Generation is, as men generate men, and Phyſicians make Phyſicians, *&c.* then Presbyters may make Presbyters. If it muſt be by *Superior Power*, then who maketh *Archbiſhops* in *England*, or

Pope

Popes at *Rome*, who have no Superiors, and ſo (by them) no authority? So much for the Hiſtorical Characters of the Canonical Conformiſts.

But after all this, we grant, that there is ſome tye and union among them; They all own Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, with an *Et cætera*; the *reſt* as the Canon ſpeaketh: They all agree to declare and ſubſcribe the words impoſed, and promiſe or Covenant accordingly, and ſwear Obedience to their Ordinaries. *E. g.* Though ſuch as Mr. *Bull* and Dr. *Tully* write againſt each other, of Juſtification as by Faith or Works; though many are very much againſt the Doctrine of Mr. *Thorndike*, Mr. *Parker*, Mr. *Sherlock*, and ſuch other, yet they all ſubſcribe the ſame Articles about Juſtification, Free-will, Predeſtination. And I doubt not but there are very many not only Learned, but Pious men among them, who yet by ſtrong prejudice and paſſion, through education, converſe, croſs intereſts, and unacquaintedneſs with Diſſenters, and the many ſcandals that have riſen, and the extremes which many have run into, are poſſeſt with a conceit, that the ruine, impriſonment, baniſhment or ſilencing of Nonconformiſts, is neceſſary to the proſperity of their party, called by them *The Church*.

And to do the Papiſts right, they agree to be members of *one Church*, and to be for the Dignities, Wealth and Power of their Clergy, and take the ſame Oaths, and are under the ſame Canons, *&c.* though they differ about the Supremacy it ſelf, as between the Pope and the Prelates in General Councils; and about ſwearing, forſwearing, lying, murder, depoſing and killing Kings, fornication, and many ſuch as the *Janſeniſts* have opened at large: All theſe differences they can bear with, and the many different Sects of

Fryers, fitted to the ſeveral humours of men, as long as they are for one Common ſociety and intereſt: And doubtleſs many of ſtrict lives do think it a ſervice to the Church, and ſo to God, to kill, burn and deſtroy others that are againſt them, as they do.

There is ſome one (with what mind I know not) that hath written a book called *The Catholick Hierarchy*, pleading like an Independent againſt humane *Impoſitions*: But in a Digreſſion ſo diligently labouring to prove, that the *Dioceſans* Subordination of Churches will unavoidably infer a Pope or Univerſal Head, that I take it to be a dangerous book; while it ſtalleth the ſaid *Dioceſans*, whether imprudently or fraudulently as a Prevaricator, I know not; he ſaith more for a Pope, without any antidote, than is ordinarily to be elſewhere found, and then moſt heads are able to anſwer; though the main concluſion is fully confuted in my laſt book againſt *Johnſon*, alias *Terret*, the Papiſt.

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CHAP. III.

The Meer Nonconformiſt.

1. BY the preſent Meer Nonconformiſts, we mean thoſe that 1660, by the Kings Conceſſion made their propoſals for Reformation and Concord, and as are of the Judgment then by them profeſſed. I meddle not with others unknown.

2. Their profeſt Religion is *Meer Chriſtianity*, eſſentially contained in the Sacramental Covenant, explained in the Creed, Lords-prayer and Decalogue, and integrally in the ſacred Scripture.

3. Yet as Chriſtians are accidentally called *Proteſtants*, becauſe they renounce Popery; ſo we are *Catholicks*, as renouncing all Schiſmatical Sects; and *Nonconformiſts*, becauſe we dare not Conform to all that is impoſed on us.

4. We hold that all Chriſtians ſhould Love each other as themſelves, and do them all the good they can, and no hurt.

5. We hold that all baptized in Infancy ſhould ſolemnly at age renew and own that Covenant, as adult members.

6. And that all that do ſo, not nullifying their profeſſion by inconſiſtent hereſie or ſin, ſhould be received in Communion.

7. That ſuch as renew it not, or are proved to forſake it, or heinouſly ſin againſt it, ſhould be reproved, and after ſufficient admonition, if impenitent, be declared unfit for Church-Communion, and accordingly avoided.

8. That God hath appointed that there be ſtated Aſſemblies of Chriſtians, eſpecially on the Lords-days, where he ſhall be worſhipped, Men inſtructed, and Communion exerciſed.

9. That theſe Congregations ſhould have known ſtated Paſtors,

Paſtors, to be their Teachers and Guides in worſhip and holy living.

10. That theſe Paſtors by Office have the power of the Church-keys, to judge whom to take in by Baptiſm, and whom to admoniſh as Criminal, to reject as impenitent, and to abſolve and receive again as penitent in their proper charge.

11. That Baptiſm and the Euchariſt being a Gift of a ſealed pardon, and of Chriſt, and life, no unbelieving nor unwilling perſon is capable of them: Therefore none but *believing Conſenters*, or *Volunteers* and their Infants, ſhould be baptized, and Volunteers only admitted to the Lords-Supper.

12. And though Magiſtrates ſhould promote the ſacred Work, and Rule the Churches, and keep peace and order by the Sword, and ſee that all have competent Teachers, and hinder the intollerable; yet may they not invade the Paſtors office, or peoples right, nor force men to truſt their Souls to the Paſtoral Care of unable or untruſty men, nor hinder them from chuſing better for themſelves, any more than they may confine them to untruſty Phyſicians, Servants or Wives.

13. That becauſe the Paſtoral Office cannot be exerciſed either by, or on the unwilling; mutual conſent is neceſſary to the Relation of Paſtor and Flock.

14. That it is part of the Paſtors Office to word his own Sermons and Prayers: But yet if to avoid diſcord or errour ſome common forms be agreed on, not overthrowing the Paſtors office, they may be fitly uſed, till by accident they do more hurt than good.

15. The Laws of Magiſtrates *Circa Sacra*, and the conſent and cuſtom of Churches ſhould not in lawful things be croſſed by humorous dividing Singularity.

16. No one Liturgy was impoſed on any National Church, or any Patriarchate for many hundred years after the Apoſtles days (yea and after *Conſtantine*): But every Biſhop or Paſtor

Paſtor was the chuſer of his Words and Practice.

17. Chriſtians ſhould all live in Love, and walk peaceably by the Divine Scripture-Rule, ſo far as they have attained, ſo waiting for increaſe of grace.

18. We muſt receive the weak in the faith, and ſuch as differ tolerably from us, even as Chriſt receiveth us; and no Chriſtian ſhould be excommunicated, but for impenitency in ſins, ſubverting faith, or holy living.

19. Nor muſt Chriſts Miniſters be forbid to preach the Goſpel, becauſe of tollerable differences.

20. And thoſe that through differences and ſcruples cannot comfortably worſhip God under one Paſtor, or in the Words or Ceremonies of one Church, ſhould have leave to do it in another, keeping ſound Doctrine, Love and Peace.

21. The number and need of the people muſt determine whether a particular Church ſhall have one Paſtor or more.

22. If one for Concord be Preſident to the reſt, and the Senior Paſtors be guides to the younger, we are not againſt it.

23. Nor yet if the Magiſtrate or Churches by conſent appoint ſome of the Graver to be viſitors of many Churches, and to inſtruct and keep the younger in peace.

24. Nor will we quarrel againſt the Names of Biſhops, or Archbiſhops, or their Wealth and Honour, while Faith, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Love are preſerved.

25. If by a National Church, they mean either a *Chriſtian Kingdom*] or [*all the Churches of a Nation as under one Prince*] or [*as aſſociated for Concord*] we deny none ſuch.

26. For we hold that all Chriſtians ſhould live in as much Concord as they can, and that Synods are uſeful to that end.

27. We muſt honour our Rulers, though they afflict us.

28. We hold that we muſt ſeparate from no Church or Chriſtian farther than they ſeparate from Chriſt, though we muſt not ſin againſt God for communion with any. We take it for a great ſin for any party to appropriate the Church only

only to themſelves: We own no Church but as part of the Catholick (or univerſal) Church, and we hold all our Aſſemblies as in union and communion with All the true Churches on earth, and put up our prayers and praiſes as in conjunction with theirs, not owning their failings (or our own) but their duties: And we will be members of no particular Church, which alloweth us not occaſional Communion with others; but take ſuch for Sectaries.

29. The welfare of Souls is of ſo great concernment, that we cannot think any Chriſtian ſhould be indifferent to whom as a Paſtor he committeth the care and conduct of his Soul, any more than what Phyſician he chuſeth for his body. And the difference between the ignorant and the wiſe, and wicked and the godly, the negligent and the faithful, is of grand importance.

30. We think that all Chriſtians ſhould prefer a faithful Paſtor, before an unfaithful or inſufficient one; and a purer Church before a more corrupt, as far as they are free, without doing more hurt than good. But we will hold occaſional communion with more faulty Churches, ſo they compel us not to ſin.

31. We take not all the faults of the Paſtor, flock or ſervice, to be made ours meerly by our preſence: Nor do we think that all faults (or many and great ones conſiſtent with the neceſſaries to communion) will allow us to ſeparate, that is, either from a true Church, as none, or from lawful communion as unlawful: For Natural diſtance is not Moral Separation.

32. We take the Magiſterial impoſing of unneceſſary Oaths, Profeſſions, Subſcriptions, Practices, much more ſinful ones, as neceſſary terms of communion, and ſilencing and caſting out Chriſts faithful Servants that obey them not, to be the grand and common cauſes of Schiſm, which have, through the pride of a Domineering-Clergy, broken moſt of the Churches on Earth for above 1000 years.

33. We

33. We hate the ſpirit of pride and envy in Preachers, who cannot endure to ſee others, at leaſt that differ from them, preferred before them; and if any do but go from them, to others, or worſhip God in another place, or in other words or circumſtances, do frighten the people by their loud allarm and cry of Schiſm; as if all were of a different Religion or ſpecies of Communion, that differ from their book in Word or Ceremonies; And by that blinding name of *Different Communions*, alienate the hearts of the ignorant, and make them think of the *Dutch*, *French*, and others that only differ from them in accidents, as the Papiſts do of us that are called by them Hereticks.

34. We take him not to have the Wiſdom and Love of a ſound Chriſtian, who cannot love and bear with his fellow Chriſtians, who differ but in ſuch tollerable things.

35. Yet we think not that all ſhould preach and gather Churches that will, and that the intollerable muſt be tolerated, and that it muſt be All or none: And the Magiſtrate is Judg whom he will tolerate: but he muſt judg aright.

36. We hold the Pariſh-Diviſions to be of great convenience; Not taking all in the Pariſh for the Church, but confining Miniſters to their proper bounds.

37. And whatever differing Churches the Magiſtrate tolerateth, he muſt force them to live peaceably, and modeſtly towards others.

38. Were every Church reduced to ſuch a number, as that all might in ſeaſon have local, perſonal communion, like great Pariſhes that have Chappels; and *E.g.* every Church of 6000 Souls have ſix Paſtors conjunct, or every Corporation or Market-Town (of old called Cities) with the Neighbour-Villages, be one Church; and one among theſe Paſtors to be a Preſident Biſhop, we ſhould think it moſt like the ancient Government. But we can live in peace, where we cannot have all which we juſtly wiſh for.

39. Though ſome preach not Chriſt ſincerely, but in envy and ſtrife to add to our affliction, we rejoyce that Chriſt is preached.

40. We hold all, that for the power of Kings, the obedience of the Subjects, and againſt rebellion, which the Scripture ſpeaketh, and which the Chriſtian Churches, Politicks, Lawyers, as far as we know them, commonly hold; and more than divers chief Conformiſts: (Biſhop *Bilſons* book of *Subjection*, and *Grotius de Imperio Sum. Pat.* fullieſt ſpeak my thoughts in the greateſt part.)

41. As theſe are the meer Nonconformiſts principles, ſo their practice is accordingly: They pray for the King, and all in authority; not for preferment, but that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty: And they pray and ſeek for the publick ſafety, and live peaceably towards others.

42. They ſought reconciliation with the *Dioceſans* before the Kings return, and aſſociating upon uniting terms.

43. What the Nonconformiſts in City, Countrey, *Monks* Army, and the next Parliament did for the Kings reſtoration, is known.

44. They offered but Biſhop *Uſhers* form of Primitive Government (or Epiſcopacy) for reconciliation and concord with the Biſhops.

45. They gave publick thanks for the Kings Declaration about Eccleſiaſtical affairs, which had healed us, had it not been caſt away: In which he declareth their moderation.

46. They never made one motion for Presbytery, Lay-Elders, Independency: Nor againſt Pariſh-Churches, nor againſt the Biſhops Lordſhips, or place in Parliament, or Wealth; Though, I confeſs, they deſired better than they ſaw fit to ask.

47. They did as much with the Biſhops, as if it had been for their lives, by Condeſcention, Reaſon and Petition, to have

have prevented the foreſeen diviſions, and were the ſeekers of Peace.

48. The Liturgy which they offered, had not one word of exception returned by the Biſhops; nor were their *Reply* or *Petition* anſwered by them to this day.

49. They offered their ſolemneſt Proteſtation or Oaths, that it was to avoid ſin that they refuſed Conformity; and yet many reported that we held all for indifferent, except renouncing the Covenant.

50. The New Liturgy came out of the Preſs ſo near the penal *Bartholomew*-day, that in almoſt all Counties of *England*, they were turned out for not declaring Aſſent to a book which they never ſaw, or could ſee; and the Conformers there owned it before they ſaw it.

51. The Nonconformiſts knowing that the Magiſtrate hath the power of the Temples and Tythes, never pretended any right to them when they were caſt out: But knowing that they were juſtly poſſeſſed of their Paſtoral relation to their flocks, they believed not that the meer will of the Magiſtrate diſobligeth them. Yet they believe that when the continuance will do more hurt than good, they and the flock ſhould part by conſent.

52. We never heard that any of the 2000 ejected Miniſters were caſt out for any crime or falſe doctrine, but meerly for not Conforming by Declaration, Subſcription and Practice.

53. Nor have we heard that any, or many in all theſe times of tryal have been convicted of hereſie or drunkenneſs, ſwearing, curſing, deceiving, fornication, or any ſuch immorality.

54. I am ſure they have oft requeſted that Laws may be made to Conſtrain them to live peaceably, to abuſe none, and to puniſh them as much as others, if any of them be found guilty of any ſuch crime; and that ſuch Laws may bring it

to the tryal, who they be that are of ſcandalous lives.

55. They have been thankful for bare connivence and opportunity to preach for nothing, ſave what they receive from the hearers charity, theſe 18 years: Some that could live without it have preached freely; and the reſt, could they have lived and their families without bread, had rather have been no burden to any; They are naturally no more in love with a beggarly ſordid life than others: The Conformiſts would be loth to live on Charity: Many hundreds have long had nothing, or next to nothing of their own, and Wives and many Children to maintain, Houſe-rent to pay, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, &c. to buy: and nothing but mens Charity to defray all this. And in the Countreys Money is ſcarce, Charity too cold, and moſt of the Rich are taught by the Clergy to condemn them: And if they come to great Towns, the Clergy reproach them.

56. Many have dyed in priſon, many catcht their death there; many had their goods and books taken away; and many endured long impriſonments, and the proſecution goeth on.

57. The Magiſtrates of *London*, and other places, have been vexed, and ſued by Informers for not proſecuting them.

58. They preached moſtly privately to few about *London*, for fear of giving offence, till the people in the dreadful Plague, which killed about 100000 were left as ſheep without ſhepherds, crouding into another world, and the Nonconformiſts durſt not forbear to teach them: And God ſo greatly bleſt their labours, that the People and Preachers, who had been thus awakened by devouring death, reſolved no more for fear of man to neglect the care and intereſt of Souls. O who could be ſilent when thouſands that lookt for ſpeedy death did croud for help in their neceſſary preparation. This firſt drew the *London* Nonconformiſts into more open exerciſe of their office, which encouraged thoſe

in

in the Countrey to imitation. And it is not their judgment that they are bound to preach, when by oppoſing violence, or the offending of Rulers it is like to do more hurt than good, and once preaching to deprive them of all the uſefulneſs of their lives: The ſpirit of the Prophets is ſubject to the Prophets (to Reaſon and Prudence in the uſe of gifts, as Dr. *Hammond* expoundeth it): But whatever it coſt them, when there is true Neceſſity and Opportunity, making the good like to be greater than the hurt, they judg that they muſt uſe the Miniſtry which they are vowed and ordained to.

59. When the Plague was over, ſome thought once again to retire; and the fire burning down the Churches, and the people being deſtitute, conſtrained them (though forbidden) to go on. O what is man! What were the Clergy that took upon them the Charge of Souls, that they durſt be againſt ſuch mens Preaching of the Goſpel in ſuch a City, when ſuch a Plague, and ſuch flames had declared the neceſſity.

60. Even when the Plague was raging, and the Court and Parliament fled from it to *Oxford*, they there were making the *Oxford*-Oath, and Act of Confinement, to baniſh the Nonconformiſts from the deſolate City, and all Corporations, *&c.* And they that before purpoſed to come to the Pariſh-Churches, durſt not come, leſt the Congregation being witneſs of their being in the City, *&c.* they ſhould be ſent to the Jayl.

61. Moſt that we hear of in the Countreys, and ſome about *London*, preach not at the time of publick worſhip, but go themſelves to the publick Churches, when they have honeſt tolerable men: I and others here, do ordinary hear and communicate in our Pariſh-Churches (when even the laſt *Whitſunday* I do not think there were above 100 Communicants in a Pariſh, that its thought hath 20000 Souls, and yet all the reſt are not hunted as Schiſmaticks). And ſo *our* Schiſm is not for withdrawing from the Pariſh-Churches, but for communicating alſo with others (which we avow): As if it were

were greater Schism to *separate from none*, than to *separate from all* save the *Diocesan Conformists*, who appropriate the Church to themselves.

62. We take it to be our duty to do our best to keep up the reputation of honest peaceable Conformists, lest our Concord and the peoples edification be hindered.

63. When we thought it a service to the Conformists, to help them in teaching some of their Parishes, which are exceedingly too great to hear them, and to enjoy all their Pastoral helps, and we preach, as they confess, the same doctrine as they, yet we never asked or expected the least part of their maintenance (much less Preferments, Prebends, Deaneries or Bishopricks), but would have been thankful to have leave to be their helpers for nothing; but cannot have their consent.

64. Those of us that preach at the hours of publick worship, do it for the most part, where their hearers knowing that they cannot have the just benefit of the Parish-Pastors office in publick and private, find it necessary statedly to chuse other helps; and other hours would greatly disorder their family-duties: Besides the Independents that have long had their gathered Churches.

65. Though our judgment be against Pluralities and Non-residences, we say little against it, lest we should be thought to desire part of the prey, or to envy their riches.

66. Though we feared, that if we conformed to the Professions, Subscriptions, Oaths, Covenants and Practices beforenamed; and this deliberately, and on pretence of keeping our Liberty to preach against the sins of others, we should be guilty of all the sin and its aggravations, which we named in the first *Plea* for *Peace*; yet knowing how various representations make mens judgments to differ, we became not herein Accusers of the Conformists, but disavowed it, leaving them to their proper judg, and medling with no mens mattters but our own.

67. And

67. And leſt it ſhould ſeem to reflect on them as guilty, or exaſperate our afflicters, we have moſtly forborn theſe 17 or 18 years, ſo much as to open the matters and reaſons of our Nonconformity, and ſilently undergone reproach.

68. Yea when great Biſhops have told our Superiors, that we judged nothing but renouncing the Covenant unlawful, and have called to us, and ſet Parliament-men to call out, [*What it is that we would have*], and never would give us leave to tell them; we have patiently been ſilent: And when great Biſhops have told me that our Rulers took us as not ſincere, for not giving our reaſons, and that they would Petition that we might no longer be ſuffered to keep up a Schiſm, and give no reaſon for it: I have offered them to beg it on my knees, if there were any hope to obtain liberty but once to render our reaſons of not conforming.

69. And when the Act ceaſed which reſtrained the Preſs, we ſtill forbore, till they gave out, [*That now it was clear, that for our baffled cauſe we had no defence, but went on to ſin againſt our conſciences*], which conſtrained me at laſt to open ſomewhat of our caſe, at which yet they are diſpleaſed.

70. Though multitudes of Books have been written againſt us, charging us with Schiſm, and calling for execution of the Law againſt us, yea perſwading King and People, as the Plotters do, that we are cheriſhing principles of rebellion; we thought it beſt to imitate Chriſt, and ſilently to bear all, and let our Lives and Works, rather than our Apologies, anſwer for us; till conſtrained, I publiſhed a full account of our Principles of Government and Obedience, leſt continued ſilence paſs for guilt.

71. Their conſtant laſt accuſation is about the late Wars: When-as 1. not one of very many of the preſent Nonconformiſts ever medled with them. 2. And we offer them thanks to ſilence only the guilty. 3. And many Conformiſts (and one Archbiſhop) were in Arms for the Parliament. 4. And we have

have not requited them till of late, with telling them that it was the Conformists here that began the War.

72. When some say that they requite us for casting out the Conformists heretofore; we offer them a thousand thanks if they will cast out none but those that cast out them. I confess I took it for a great mercy to have grosly ignorant, drunken Readers and Priests cast out, of what opinion soever, and better put in: But I and others wrote against putting out any worthy and tolerable man for being against the Parliament, or for Prelacy.

73. Whereas some cheat the ignorant, by telling them, that [*We would have every Minister be a Pope in his own Parish*]. 1. A Pope is one that arrogateth the Government over all other Pastors, even of the whole world: Whereas we would govern no Pastors at all, nor any people, but our particular flocks. 2. And these we would have only to be Volunteers: And is not he liker to a Tyrant, that will be a Pastor to thousands against their wills, than he that will take charge of none but Consenters? 3. Specially the Independents, who are accused as giving the power to the people, and depending on their charity, do not like tyrants compel any to obey them.

74. Some are taught to make the Presbyterians odious, by the rigor of their Discipline, and the stool of Repentance, which the licentious fear. But 1. our judgment is, that none but willing Consenters should be Church-members, and as such come under Discipline. 2. And that none be excommunicate for any sins (ordinarily) unless after due warning and patience he refuse to repent. 3. And God hath made Repentance necessary to comforting-absolution, pardon and salvation. 4. And it's a thousand pities that any should be so mad in sin, as to think Repentance too dear for pardon.

75. Some say that we are for *Excommunicating Kings:* What other men have been, is nothing to us: We take not our judgments on trust from any party; but the Scripture is our

our Rule, and the Primitive Church our pattern. Some of us have written againſt the lawfulneſs of diſhonouring Princes and Rulers by proper excommunications, as being againſt the fifth Command; and Rituals give place to Morals: And ſome of the greateſt Church-men that have caſt us out, have been for Rulers Excommunication: We are not inſenſible what Treaſons and Domination not only the Pope but the Councils of Biſhops (even without the Pope as in the caſe of *Ludovicus Pius*, and others) have exerciſed over Princes and Kingdoms by excommunications, and curſed curſing men from Chriſt.

76. We find that when in the contentions between the Popes and the Emperours, the Clergy familiarly *ſwore on both ſides* as intereſt moved them; and as *Abbas Urſpergenſus* ſaith, *Perjury was the common brand of Prieſt and people*; it was far from proving a cure of Schiſm, though it was pretended for that uſe.

77. As the Law forbiddeth us, ſo we profeſs to intend nothing here written as an accuſation of the Government, Laws, Liturgy, or Conformiſts, but only as a deſcription of the reaſons of our own Nonconformity. But if it ſhould prove true that Cities, Corporations, Biſhops and Prieſts are guilty but of half the evil againſt God, Truth, Conſcience, the Goſpel, the Church, the ſouls of men, the good of the King and Subjects, which we fear we ſhould be guilty of if we did conform, I had rather be a ſlave than that Clergyman that ſhould encourage them in it.

78. And if it ſhould prove that any of them are under ſuch guilt, in the end it will prove but an uneffectual defence, to accuſe the innocent and reprovers, and ſo to divert them, by keeping them on the defenſive part; while they are accuſed of odious ſin for not ſinning, and called intollerable for refuſing to concur in wickedneſs.

79. Ever ſince we were caſt out and ſilenced, we have thankfully accepted all motions and overtures for concord. We have been ſeveral times ſince the firſt Treaty, called to new Treaties, in one Dr. *Manton* and others offered thankfully to accept leave to preach for nothing in the Pariſh Churches

where the Miniſters deſire it, and when the Common-Prayer is uſed. Another time being called by the Lord Keeper *Bridgman* we agreed with Biſhop *Wilkins* and Dr. *Burton*, and it was drawn up in an Act of Concord by Judg *Hale*, but voted by the Commons not to be brought in. Since then we were invited to treat with Dr. *Tillotſon* and Dr. *Stillingfleet*, who ſeemed to conſent to the terms of the form of an healing Act which we offered them; but they found that the Biſhops would not conſent. By all which we have ſtill ſhewed, that we have never ceaſed to ſeek for peace.

80. We have never ſhunned to read or hear all that can be ſaid, to prove that we need not fear all the guilt of Lying, Perjury, falſe Covenanting againſt duty, and all the other ſins, with their many and heinous aggravations, which we fear being guilty of, if we ſhould conform: Nor did we ever refuſe to give the reaſon of our fears, to the Learned'ſt man that doth accuſe us.

81. As is aforeſaid, we never to this day put up our Petition to any Parliament, ſince we were ſilenced for relief, compaſſion, or to be heard; which may ſeem ſtrange to thoſe that know our long accuſations and ſufferings.

82. So far are we from loving Schiſm, that we take Unity to be eſſential to the univerſal and particular Churches; and that diviſion is deſtruction, though every difference is not ſuch diviſion. And the chief of my ſtudies and labours in the world is, How to reconcile and unite divided Chriſtians. And having fully proved in a Treatiſe of the *only terms of common concord*, that it will never be attained but on the terms of Primitive ſimplicity, preſcribed by Chriſt, and practiſed by the firſt Churches; it is becauſe our Conformity is inconſiſtent with ſuch terms of common concord, and ſuch as we think but Sectarian ſchiſm, that we are Nonconformiſts. Let him that is for dividing the child, be taken for no true mother of it.

83. We are not againſt all Litanies; our Litany hath not leſs but more than theirs: We heartily ſay, *From Atheiſm, Infidelity and Popery, from prophaneneſs, perſecution and oppreſſion,*

preſſion, from all ſedition, privy conſpiracy, and rebellion, from falſe doctrine, hereſie and ſchiſm; from an ignorant, proud, and worldly domineering Clergy, from malignant hatred of Gods holy Image and ſervants, and ſerious worſhip, and from contempt of his word and commandments, Good Lord deliver us.

Jam. 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Who is a wiſe man and endued with knowledg among you, let him ſhew out of a good converſation his works with meekneſs of wiſdom. But if ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in your hearts* (much more ſilencing perſecution) *glory not, and lye not againſt the truth. This wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh. For where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work. But the wiſdom that is from above is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle and eaſie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſie. And the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace of them that make peace.* 1 Theſ. 2. 15, 16. *Who both killed the Lord Jeſus and their own Prophets, and have perſecuted us. And they pleaſe not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to ſpeak to the Gentiles that they might be ſaved, to fill up their ſin always. For the wrath is come upon them to the utmoſt.*

I determine not in all this, *Who is the Schiſmatick*, but make a pair of Spectacles for the purblind to diſcern it.

But, Reader, I muſt earneſtly intreat thee, as thou loveſt thy Soul, to remember, that as toys, and plays, and luſt, and pride, and drunkenneſs, and gluttony, and ambition, and covetouſneſs, are the Devils nets by which he taketh the moſt of the world; ſo he hath a ſecond ſort for thoſe that are above theſe things, and that is, the delights of wit in the vain unprofitable part of Learning: And for thoſe that yet are above this, one of his laſt ſnares is *Religious wrangling*; turning faith and godlineſs into *opinions, ſidings, formalities* and *perverſe diſputings*, eſpecially with men of corrupt minds, that take gain for Godlineſs, and think that *Reputation* and *Money* will coin any thing that is for them, into *Truth* and *Goodneſs*.

I conclude therefore, That if thou would'ſt eſcape that

Schiſm

Schism and *Dangerous sin*, which Contenders charge on another, the way is short and plain.

I. Understand, and stand to thy Baptismal-Vow, and see thy *Belief*, *Love* and *Practice* of known Christianity, according to our Creed, Lords-Prayer and Decalogue, in Love to God, thy Soul and thy Neighbour, in Godliness, Charity, Justice and Sobriety, be serious and sincere; and then thou art certainly of that Catholick Church, which Christ is the Head of and will save.

II. Love all Christians as such, according to the measures of their goodness; and remembering thy own weakness, pity and bear with the infirmities of the weak; and when others wrangle against them, and abuse them, study thou to do them good.

III. Look on all particular Churches as members of the universal afore described; and chuse the best thou canst for thy *ordinary communion* and *good*, so it be not to a greater hurt by accident: But deny not *occasional communion* with any (though accused by others) further than they force thee to sin, or than they separate from Christ: Thy presence makes thee not guilty of the tolerable faults which thou canst not amend. Take them for *Sectaries* and *Separatists*, who forbid their communion with all that are not of their mind and way in tolerable differences.

IV. Take heed of neglecting any truth or duty, or living in any sin, which all good Christians, even the Contenders are agreed about: And in these thou wilt find enough for peace of Conscience and Salvation.

V. Be sure that thou approve thy self to God, and take his Law for thy Rule, and his Love and the heavenly Glory for thy portion, hope and All; and let not the flesh, nor worldly interest cheat thee into justly suspected sin; nor the *Threats* or *Flatteries*, or *Bribes* of men, either *Drive*, *Allure* or *Hire* thee to be false to thy Conscience, thy Saviour and God; nor prophanely with *Esau*, to sell thy Birthright for a morsel, or hazard thy part in Heaven for a transitory befooling dream and shadow of profit, honour or delight.

FINIS.